"EAST PAKISTAN"

by

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India is one of the founder members of the United Nations Organisation which was founded away back in 1945. As such, we have an obligation to give it our loyal support at all times to enable it to operate impartially and effectively to ensure world peace. Pakistan - which consists of two zones—West Pakistan and East Pakistan—is also a member of the UNO. The creation of Pakistan, which was carved out of the sub-continent of the old India, was agreed to by the then leaders of our two countries.

When Field Marshal Ayub Khan became the President of Pakistan, he instituted what is known as controlled democracy which, I believe, had only 80,000 selected voters. This constitution appears to have worked well for some time, but, later it came under very strong public criticism resulting in Field Marshal Ayub Khan giving up the Presidentship in favour of General Yahya Khan. Some time after General Yahya Khan became the President, he held general elections in West ~~Bengal~~ Pakistan and East Pakistan with the idea of setting up, in due course, a democratic Government. In this General election, in East Pakistan Sheik Mujibur Rehaman's party had a landslide victory. After these elections, the President of Pakistan, had a series of discussions with Sheik Mujibur Rehman, the very popular leader in East Pakistan, to consider his 6 point programme for the establishment of a new democratic Government. The President did not accept all these 6 points and so the discussions broke down.

From Press Reports it is seen that in the wake of this break down, serious internal disorders affecting the law and order situation in East Pakistan broke out. In order to maintain law and order, the papers reported, Pakistan Government took military action. As the situation got worse more intensive military action was taken with corresponding increase in the Guerilla activities organised by the Freedom Fighters.

I had gone to East Pakistan on my own for about a week in the latter half of September 1964 to find out what had led to the serious killings early in 1964 of innocent people both on our side and in East Pakistan. I met there a number of East Pakistan citizens, both Muslims and Hindus, during my travels and talked to them about the problems of refugees and the miniority classes in East Pakistan. From these talks, I gathered that they felt they were being treated as 'step children' by the Pakistan Government. They complained that not much money was being spent on the development of East Pakistan while the bulk of the money which came in from foreign countries, was spent in West Pakistan. They further said that although 80% of the foreign exchange earned by the Pakistan Government was earned from the export trade from East Pakistan in respect of Jute, Tea and other commodities, all the big banks were in West Pakistanand were controlled by some 200 families there and by only some some 15 families of East Pakistan. The Muslims ~~and the West Pakistan~~ and their ways of life were all very different. They further said that they had no senior officers from East Pakistan in either administrative or in defence services. They did not like this. They thought that this their 'pent-up' feelings of unhappiness in this regard may come to surface before long. They had my understanding. I had brought these matters to the notice of the authorities concerned in Pakistan and in India. The overwhelming victory of the East Pakistan party in the recent

Said that there was nothing in Common between East Pakistan Muslims and those of West Pakistan other than religion. Their Language, their dress, their food —

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elections had given the East Pakistanis the hopes of their chance at last to have their "Wrongs" put "right" when their victorious party became the ruling party. It is this denied chance that has brought about this crisis in Pakistan. The intense desire of East Pakistanis to have their own Democratic Government will, I feel, continue for long and that no amount of military action may be able to suppress this desire.

As a result of the military action and the guerilla warfare activities, as reported in the Press, some tens of thousands of unfortunate, unarmed innocent civilians, men and women, old and young, have been killed and their humble properties destroyed. These wholesale killings are indeed an unpardonable crime and do deserve outright condemnation of the world. However, it is all most tragic. These killings have resulted in driving out of East Pakistan terror stricken, harmless civilians, who have been pouring into our country in very large numbers which has now reached an alarming figure of 6 to 7 million. I believe, these refugees consist of all communities--Hindus, Muslims, and others --more Hindus than others. They have all fled from their homes because of complete insecurity to their lives there.

This lrge influx of refugees into India is imposing on our Government an inescapable obligation on purely humanitarian grounds, which is causing grave anxieties to our Government, mainly from the financial point of view. At a time, when we need every paisa we have to implement the Government's plans for the "Garibi-Hatao" and other important national development projects, a very appreciable portion of the money needed for our country for these purposes has to be diverted to meet the high cost of feeding, housing, clothing and hospitalising of these millions who have come to our land seeking shelter here. I know it is our duty to give them shelter, but, we cannot have them living on our land indefinitely as we cannot 'foot-the-bill' on looking after them entirely on our own limited resources. Their long stay on our soil will seriously shatter our own country's economy and indeed the welfare all round of our 550 million peoph.

The refugee problem cannot be regarded as a matter of India's concern. It is, in fact, an indisputable International concern and so the UNO will have to accept total responsibility, financially, and otherwise, for providing food, clothing, shelter and so on to these millions. The UNO is the only body in the world which can mobilise International help for this sacred cause.

The refugee problem will remain for long unless and until conditions are created in East Pakistan to give the refugees a feeling of security to prompt them to return to their homes safely. ~~Here the Pakistan Government to~~ Here again the UNO can and must play its inescapable part to pursuade the Pakistan Government to stop their military action and the freedom fighters their guerilla warfare and then mutually agree to sit round a table to discuss the East Pakistan issue amicably to find an answer to ~~find~~ satisfy both. This is indeed a political matter which cannot be solved by military action, no matter how strong and how sustained it may be. In this round table talk, the UNO can certainly offer its services to help. There is no time to waste. Any delay on the part of the UNO to act will certainly have repercussions on the neighbouring countries, which may result in local wars breaking out and thus perhaps tragically ~~leading to~~ World War III. This must be stopped, come what may, and only the UNO can do that not by force but by effective pursuation. India must immediately send one or two specially selected emissaries to the UNO to remind it of the ~~seriousness~~ gravity

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of the refugee problem and to get it to act to stop this fighting in East Pakistan immediately. UNO cannot escape this very important International responsibility. Further, our diplomatic representatives in foreign countries should bring home to the Governments of the countries they are accredited to the seriousness of the refugee problem and get them to send immediate help to India in cash and in kind to held her meet the demands of these refugees and to direct their respective representatives at the UNO to act with courage and ~~and form~~ on the lines stated. Soon

In this context, I feel distressed to see public opinion urging our government to officially recognise the Government which has been provisionally formed by the Freedom Fighters which they call as Bangla Desh Government, that is, to call East Pakistan as Bangla Desh. Thank God, we have a Prime Minister with courage, who has not yielded to these pressures. If we recognised Bangla Desh unilaterally, it will not be in keeping with the spirit of the UNO, who, in fact, should be the first to recognise. It is surprising that many top leaders are insisting on this recognition completely ignoring its serious consequences nationally. Such people are freely talking of going to war with Pakistan to see that a Democratic Goverment is set up in Pakistan. I just cannot understand the minds of such people who obviously just do not know the implications of wars. Such a war, pray God it will never come, will certainly ~~xhm~~ ruin the economy of our country. Are we ~~going to subordimte~~ the well being and welfare of the 550 million people of India for the sake of the democratic rights of ~~the six and half~~ million of Freedom Fighters in East Pakistan? God knows what the future of India and Pakistan will be in such a war.

Some say that we do not like thr threat of imposing a 'puppet regime' in East Pakistan and that the solution as stated by the President of Pakistan in his broadcast recently cuts at the very roots of democracy. What right have we to make such utterances? Pakistan is an independent country and this is interfereing with the internal affairs of Pakistan, a neighbouring country. It is not in keeping with the spirit of our oft talked 'Panchal Sheel'.

I wonder how many do realise of the possibility of serious internal boomerangs' coming in the wake of this recognition which may further break up the unity of our country which rot first came with the formation of lingusitic states. It is common knowledge throughout the country of there being ~~internation~~ "trouble-spots" from where these 'boomerangs' may come. In order to ensure the security and the strength of our country, let us be people of grit and courage and unitedly demand the abolition of linguistic states with all speed and then divide the country into a 'hundred' parts, if need be only from the administrative and economic points of view.

In this hour of crisis in Pakistan, India can offer Pakistan her help to try and bring about understanding between the Pakistan government and the Freedom Fighters and so help to stop these killings of innocent people there. This offer can be made by our Government by spending a special emissary with a letter from our Prime Minister to the President of Pakistan. Such an offer would certainly raise the image of India in the eyes of the world. Let us do it, It is not too late. Let us also try hard with all our diplomatic might to prusude the Pakistan Government and the Freedom Fighters of East Pakistan to create safe and secure conditions in East Pakistan to prompt the refugees to return to their homes these early.

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Some of our top leaders keep talking of their concern for the fate of the people of East Pakistan and Democracy there and so on and so forth, but, hardly any one important person has ever said a word in all earnestness about stopping the almost daily brutal killings of our own people by our own people in West Bengal, in the last year or so. This is just shocking.

Let us ~~know-raise~~ now rise above the common level and show the greatness of our Nation by not talking any more or recognising Bangla Desh nor of expressing the unpardonable, uncharitable wishes of some people to see the end of Pakistan and so on. The new put out from vrious sources and various agencies, official or otherwise, on the happenings in East Pakistan, must be balanced and not be partial—as seems is being done by some telling that the 'Regular-Pakistan-Army' is getting a good mauling from the 'Mukti-foug' every where. We should not take sides.

Let us do every thing we can for our two countries to become friendly neighnours and so leave for the crores of children of today a legacy of happy, friendly, prosperous and peaceful countries---India and Pakistan. This would be fully in keeping with our civilisation, our culture and our philosophy.

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